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IDENTITY OF *HELIOSEA CELERIS* *MELICLEPTROIDES*

WITH NOTES ON ITS HABITS

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IN JUNE, 1963, a series of "*Helioseia celeris melicleptroides*" Benjamin (Noctuidae) was collected two miles north of Elephant Butte, Plumas County, California. These seven specimens are in fresh condition, having emerged very shortly before their capture. Five of the seven specimens were collected on *Eriogonum latifolium* var. *nudum* (Benth.) where they were feeding on the blossoms; the other two specimens were collected from inorganic objects. The peak of their flight seemed to be around 1:00 P.M., the temperature was in the low seventies, and the sky a bit overcast, thus making the capture of these ordinarily wary, rapid fliers quite easy.

In the original description of this subspecies, Benjamin (1935) admits the very close similarity of *melicleptroides* to nominate *celeris* (Grote). The original description reads: "Entirely similar to *celeris celeris* excepting that the ground color of the fore wing is olive fuscous, and the median band is conspicuously cream white creating the habitus of a *Melicleptria*, while the hind wing has much less of the deep red orange of the typical subspecies." At first this description was thought to be of a worn or faded specimen, as fresh specimens from the same area are certainly not fitting of this description.

Upon examination of the Holotype in the United States National Museum it was found that the type is equally as colorful in maculation as is *celeris celeris* in all respects. Comparison of the male genitalia in both the Sierran and the coast range populations also leads one to conclude consubspecificity. The type locality for *melicleptroides* is Keddie, Plumas County, California ("VI-20"), very near where the specimens under examination were collected.

Comparison of the Sierran population to those of the coast ranges proves the populations examined to be consubspecific in all respects, and the subspecific name *melicleptroides* is therefore sunk as a synonym of *celeris celeris*.

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